OUTREACH programme of NIOH

842. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the NIOH, Kolkata has been extending help to handicapped people all over the country in the last three years;

(b) if so, to what extent Government have extended the example of OUTREACH programmes to other institutes in the country;

(c) what steps Government are taking to ensure that the OUTREACH programme of NIOH, Kolkata is accepted in principle as a means of reaching poor and needy people; and

(d) the steps proposed by Government to have similar programmes all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) National Institutes including National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped are extending outreach services to poor and needy persons with disabilities through their regional centres and composite rehabilitation camps to provide various clinical therapeutic services, aids and appliances as well as for awareness generation on prevention, identification of disabilities etc.

Deemed University status for NIOH

843. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to convert the NIOH, Kolkata into a Deemed University;

(b) the powers being given to the NIOH to start functioning autonomously and independently to improve standards;

(c) whether Government are also encouraging the need to create a good and productive atmosphere at NIOH;

(d) the steps proposed to ensure that discipline is maintained and patients are not harassed by employees; and

(e) the assistance being provided to patients who are being harassed by indisciplined people there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata is an autonomous body registered under Societies Act, 1860 and it has full powers to function independently as per its By-laws.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) to (e) National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped takes proper care of its patients and if any complaint is received from patients remedial steps are taken to redress the situation.

Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship for SC/ST students

844. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to launch Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship (RGNF) to award fellowship to the students of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities pursuing higher studies;

(b) if so, the details of RGNF, indicating the eligibility criteria and duration of fellowship; and

(c) the amount likely to be allocated for RGNF?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Two New Central Sector Schemes namely 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship' (RGNF) for Scheduled Caste students and 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship' for Scheduled Tribe students for pursuing higher studies leading to M. Phil. and Ph. D. have been introduced during the current financial year 2005-06.

(b) Any student belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes category admitted to M. Phil./Ph. D. degree in a University or academic institution will be eligible for the award of the Fellowship. The Fellowship is on the same scale as the University Grants Commission (UGC)'s Scheme of Junior Research Fellowships (JRF). The tenure of fellowship